Sometimes, Bravery is getting out of the House

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Sometimes, Bravery is getting out of the House

by gildedhelianthia

Summary

Etho can’t remember the last time he left his house. And yet, here he is, on his way to visit - to meet - one GeminiTay.

Sometimes, bravery is getting on a plane to meet a friend.

Notes

Hello hello!! Here’s an Etho introspective, with some background Slab ‘n Stab :D

hardihood
[hahr-dee-hood]
noun
boldness or daring; courage

See the end of the work for more notes

Etho can’t remember the last time he left his house.

It must've been before COVID, before the pandemic, and even then, it would’ve been to do groceries. And *before* then, it would’ve been to visit his parents, or stop by the shopping district.

God, did he just call his *real-life town center* a shopping district?

Of course, he does go outside, taking walks around the woodland that surrounded his property, but it was different. He never really went out with… Y’know, people. Or *for* people, to be more specific.

He was really living up to the title of Hermit, in and out of Minecraft. It almost made him want to laugh.

Etho couldn't remember the last time he’d left his house. Even further than that, he couldn’t remember the last time he’d left his hometown, or, heck, left Alberta.

And yet here he is, at the airport, waiting on a plane to Newfoundland.

He’s got a small carry-on bag next to him and an Iced Peppermint Mocha in one hand, from which he takes small sips as he idly surveys the terminal traffic. It’s the busiest and loudest place he’s been in a decade, by far, but with the playlist Gem made for him to listen to on his flight, it’s manageable.

Still, Etho takes a few deep breaths and turns up the volume, temporarily quelling his anxiety.

He checks his phone for any messages from Gem. Since they’d planned this trip, she’d insisted on giving him her personal phone number, not wanting to be stuck communicating

through Discord. Etho had obliged her, and in the weeks leading up to their meet-up, the pair had texted non-stop.

She's probably streaming, a voice in his head whispers logically, *or walking Winnie. She has no reason to talk to you, or to even want to hear from you.*

Though, wasn't that technically not true? If Gem didn't want him around, or thought of him as a bother, why go through all the effort of convincing him to meet her, to stay a week with her in person?

It's because she doesn't know the real you, the voice chides, and Etho frowns, making a conscious effort to ignore it.

After all, that's what the point of this trip was. To get to know each other, off-camera. Even if it meant seeing each other face-to-face.

And while Etho was… anxious, to say the least, about how his friend would react to *him*, he was also eager. Cautiously optimistic.

He really wants to make a good impression. He's certain he won't.

Honestly, it's a miracle Etho doesn't just high-tail it out of there, or find a bathroom and let the three budding anxiety attacks and 1 panic attack he's been actively suppressing and breathing through just consume him. It's a miracle he doesn't break down in tears, or start shaking uncontrollably.

Etho's faced bears and nights out in the wilderness. He's had the sense to help a girl out of a crashed car. He's had the level head to deal with the fame and misfortune that comes with being a famous YouTuber. He's had the courage to reach out, time and time again, and make new friends.

But this. This is the bravest he's ever been.

And it's for her. *Because* of her.

The loudspeaker announces his plane, and all around him, people shuffle towards the gate. Etho stands, grips his blue luggage bag, finishes his mocha, and channels some of the hardiness he so admires from Gem into his soul as he prepares the journey to meet her, in person, once and for all.

Summoning his strength, Etho steps onto the plane.

End Notes

I wrote this rather quickly, but I am proud with how it turned out! Thanks for reading :D

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